

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE

March 5, 2002

5:30 PM

Chairman Lopez called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Lopez, Sysyn, Pinard, Shea, DeVries (late)

Messrs: J. Donovan, B. Lemire, V. Lamberton, R. Badaloti, M. McCarthy Slagle

Presentation by members of the Quality Council.

Mr. John Donovan stated I work at the Office of Youth Services and I am one of the Vice Chairs of the Quality Management Council.

Mr. Brent Lemire stated I am with the Fire Department and I am the other Co Vice-Chair. Our Chairman, Jim Roy, is going to try to be here. The purpose of our visit to you is only informational to keep you current as to the activities of the Council and to inform you that we are working on a report to the Board that will outline the activities of the Council that has gone on since its inception and also, especially for Alderman Lopez who has put a lot of effort into it, we wanted to let you know that we do have a draft policy in place for the...it is going to be called the Bright Ideas Program for City employees. Again, this is only a draft. We are sharing this with you but we also need to share it with the members of our Committee.

Chairman Lopez stated we should note that Alderman Sysyn is also on this Committee.

Mr. Lemire stated I would like to recognize the efforts of the Human Resources Department, Ginny and Maureen, for the valuable assistance that they have given us as we proceed down this road and work on a plan that would allow City employees to offer suggestions that either reduce the cost of City government or improve efficiency in City government. Alderman Lopez was one of the ones who pushed hard to get this plan. Again, this is in draft form and I just wanted to share this with you and let you know that you will be getting a report from the Council soon on all of the activities of all of the sub-Committees and the steering teams. If you have any questions, we would be happy to answer them.

Chairman Lopez stated let me just add that the TQM Committee has been working very hard for two years to come to this point in time where some regulations and incentives have to be produced in order to...I don't want to use the word but to entice employees to come forward with ideas on how the City can save money. That is the main cause of what the Aldermen are looking at. Although they look at the whole picture, when the program was started it was what are we going to get out of it. Of course, we are going to get communication among the employees, the publicity, the newsletter and in the end are there going to be any cost saving ideas coming forward. I can attest to the fact that people have worked very hard and department heads have let the people go to these meetings and I think this is the major draft policy that is going to come forward. For the Aldermen, at some point we will have to make a final decision as Aldermen as to whether the suggestion program and awards program, that we set the money aside for these individuals who can save the City some money. What we have found is that people don't want to give their ideas to their supervisors for fear that they are going to steal their ideas and they will not get any recognition. We have found that throughout the City.

Alderman Sysyn stated this program is a great idea because these people work day-to-day and they can see a lot of things that sometimes supervisors cannot see.

Ms. Lamberton stated the Committee structured the process to ensure that all suggestions would be forwarded, whether or not the supervisor agrees so there is a check and balance and they chose Human Resources to be the guard of the forms and if nothing is happening at the department level we will nudge the department head to do something with it. Also, in our budget we put in a request from CIP for \$20,000.

Mr. Lemire stated in addition the letter came down from the Committee awhile ago to ask the Mayor to appointment two Aldermen to the Council. I don't know where it stands right now.

Alderman Shea asked if someone were to come up with the idea of saving, we will say, like \$25,000 in the Health Department, the person would be rewarded with \$5,000 or whatever but is there some indication as to where the \$25,000 savings would go. Would it go back to the general fund or stay in the department?

Mr. Lemire answered that would be an issue better handled by the Finance Department or the executive branch of government. Our thrust was only to make sure that the suggestions were brought forward and moved forward properly. After that, it would be out of our realm to decide. That would be an issue for the Aldermen or the Mayor.

Alderman Shea asked does it have to be decided beforehand.

Chairman Lopez answered I don't think it would be decided beforehand. What they have in the packet is improved economy and efficiency effective to production and where the maximum category award of improved efficiency...if somebody came up with an idea that could improve efficiency in some department and even though the department head felt, and we were looking at it as a whole City and we thought that this would save us money. What they have down here and we sort of tailored this with the State who gives an individual \$400 for saving us money and doing things more efficiently. That would have to be decided by HR and the Committee that is established to go through it and report back to the Committee about the reward.

Alderman Shea asked do you think that is something that should be resolved beforehand.

Ms. Lamberton answered I think it is something that we should discuss. What Alderman Shea is trying to say is let's pretend that somebody at the Airport makes a suggestion that is going to save the City \$100,000. Who gets to keep the \$100,000? That is what he is trying to find out. I know the answer to that.

Chairman Lopez stated that would come back to the general fund.

Ms. Lamberton stated the other part of the thinking is that the Council members want the actual savings to be seen before the award is made. I am not sure I agree with that because I think if the suggestion is done thoroughly and properly and you have all of the numbers then it should happen and you should give the award while the iron is hot. That is just a different opinion.

Mr. Lemire stated they are going to be asked to present documentation backing up how the suggestion would work. It may not save money, but it may improve efficiency and they are going to be asked to document all of this prior and there will be a committee to evaluate that.

Ms. Lamberton stated in other words it would be like a research paper. You can't just say I have an idea to change light bulbs.

Chairman Lopez stated right. You have a lot of people saying here is an idea, but you don't have any backup.

Alderman Pinard asked when are you going to have a follow-up to this.

Mr. Lemire answered again we need to bring it to the whole Council. I would say probably in a month or two to make sure that they iron out everything. We have been working on it for a long time and the point of the Committee is it is an involved program that we don't want to rush into. We want to make sure that all of the bugs are worked out of it first.

Ms. Lamberton replied and we need funding.

Mr. Donovan stated right and I think it is important to note that this very closely mirrors what has been working for the State for 20+ years. There is a lot of hard work that has been put into this and we kind of jumped on the coattails of it but I think it has been pretty well established. It is an excellent framework for us to work from. There are a few bugs though.

Mr. Lemire stated I hesitate to give you an exact timeframe. We want to do it right and when we get it right we will bring it to you. It will be soon.

Chairman Lopez stated Alderman Pinard makes a good point. If in the budget process Ginny is asking for money, these questions are going to come up and if we can't produce the red ant, the way money is so scarce she might not get it.

Mr. Lemire replied this is why we are here tonight. To let you know that we are there and the budget process is coming and we are pretty much comfortable with that.

Alderman Pinard stated a few years ago at the DOT somebody brought in an employee and they gave them a T-shirt that said State of New Hampshire. This is basically what you are doing to reward the employee no matter how big or small it is.

Mr. Donovan stated it may be just a certificate. It doesn't have to be a cash reward.

Alderman DeVries asked are positions going to be affected. Say you offer up a suggestion that something can be done with four people rather than five people. Are you going to take it into that detail?

Mr. Lemire answered that is going to be up to the person and that is why the department heads...we met with them last week and that is certainly going to be up to the department heads. We can't substitute the judgement of department heads. We are mainly looking to receive and acknowledge suggestions from City employees at this point. Beyond that, that is beyond our scope.

Alderman DeVries asked has that been handled at the State.

Ms. Lamberton answered I am trying to remember. The ones that I remember are in the other category where somebody did something extraordinary like saving someone's life. The other one I remember is some person came up with the idea that at the Technical College they should change the kind of fuel they were using to heat the building and that created a great savings. Also, there was someone who had an idea for conserving water that saved the State millions of dollars. Again, in the State they have department committees and the departmental committee will review the suggestion and make a recommendation to the centralized committee. Most people are excited about it. I never saw anybody be negative about it. Some get denied. Some are not things that can work.

Mr. Lemire stated the intent was to recognize employees for suggestions that they make to benefit the City.

Alderman DeVries stated I was just wondering if that followed the labor management initiative that had been tried in the late 80's. I guess that is where it veers off and that is why that program didn't continue on.

Ms. Lamberton stated I never did see anything that deal with manpower issues at the State.

Chairman Lopez addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Communication from Kevin A. Dillon, Airport Director, requesting authorization to establish and staff five Airport Communications/Operations Specialist positions.

Ms. Lamberton stated I would like to make an amendment to that request. Kevin had hoped, before he had to go away on business, that we would be able to look at the labor grade 13 and the higher level Airport Shift Supervisors as well, which we were able to do but I wasn't able to tell him that or get to the Clerk's Office in time to make the agenda reflect that. Correct me if I am wrong, Kevin, but I think your request is to establish the five positions at the labor grade 13 level and three at the labor grade 19 level.

Mr. Dillon replied yes.

On motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn it was voted to establish and staff five Airport Communications/Operations Specialist positions and three Airport Shift Supervisor positions.

Chairman Lopez addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Proposed ordinance amendments to Section 33.027(D), Employee Recruitment and Selection; 33.027(F), Employee Recruitment and Selection; and 33.12, Maintenance of Plans submitted by Virginia Lamberton, Human Resources Director.

Ms. Lamberton stated I was going through ordinances since I arrived here and some of them, I thought, might be better if we changed them but that is just my opinion. One of the ones that is in effect right now, the first one, 33.027(D), the way it is written now when we have a vacancy in a lot of the departments, not all, but particularly the non-affiliated departments we do not post positions, which could be potential promotions within the department first. What we do is we put an ad in the newspaper, which costs money, and we have outside people applying at the same time as our in house people. Often times, the department head wants to promote somebody from within so we are wasting money on newspaper ads that would be better put into something else and we also could be offering our current employees an opportunity to have the first shot at the job, which I think is the right thing to do. Just for your information, I checked to see which affiliated people have that in their contracts right now. Airport posts for seven days, Police support staff posts for five, Firefighters check their list and take the highest five. AFCME in both contracts posts for five days. Building Maintenance posts for five days and Water Works posts for five days. You can see that we are really not doing everything equally now and it just seems like it is the right thing to do to post in-house first. That is where I am coming from. I put down three days but maybe five days would be more appropriate and consistent with the other contracts.

Alderman DeVries stated I think five days might be appropriate in case you have several shifts.

Chairman Lopez stated I think this is a good idea.

Alderman DeVries asked is this in conflict with any kind of equal opportunity employer thing. Should we do these individually?

Ms. Lamberton stated on 33.027(F) I was really...I don't know what the right words are but it really blew my mind that our ordinance for people that apply for jobs provides for...we have what I call a classification system that establishes minimum criteria for a reason for jobs and there are lots of reasons for that. One is you eliminate people who don't have the right background, education, experience or all of the above. Now we send forward people who meet the educational experience requirements, as well as the people that don't. To be honest with you, I saw that and saw all kinds of red flags for lots of reasons and one of them is if a department head were to pick somebody who had none of the credentials and you had another person who was extraordinarily qualified

and they didn't get the job, there are two things that are going on here. One is you are setting the person up who has none of the credentials to probably fail and what are you doing that for? It is just unfair to that person. The other thing is you are looking for a lawsuit. Say that person is of a minority or...everybody has a lawyer now and you are going to lose and we are going to lose. We are going to end up paying money out because we are wrong, especially when you have minimum criteria. It is illogical. So either we only send forward qualified candidates or let's just eliminate all minimum qualifications. One or the other but you really can't have both in my opinion.

Chairman Lopez stated let's take these separately because I can see that once it goes to the full Board there might be some questions.

On motion of Alderman DeVries, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to approve the ordinance amendment to Section 33.027(D), Employee Recruitment and Selection with a change from "three working days" to "five working days."

Chairman Lopez stated now on this other amendment, the question I have is if somebody needed a Masters Degree in something and was working to get their Masters Degree are we saying they could not appoint them to that position.

Ms. Lamberton replied I am saying that the first round, you know you have postings now and say the only person that applies is the person who is halfway through their Master's Degree in-house and nobody else is qualified. Then it would be up to the department head to work with me to perhaps downgrade the job for awhile and make it a lower grade or whatever it takes for that person to finish their degree. Once they finish their degree then you could return it to the higher grade or regular grade. You still win. There are lots of options but the most important thing is to be consistent and fair.

Alderman Shea asked if a person with a Masters Degree applies and the one that is working for the City is working towards a Masters Degree and applies, in this instance the one working would not be qualified.

Ms. Lamberton answered that is correct but you wouldn't require a Masters Degree unless there was a professional reason to do that. It is a valid question. As you know, a person is not a Librarian until they have an MLS. You can have 26 other degrees, but you are not a Librarian until you have a Masters. Right now we send over people who just want to be a Librarian. It doesn't work. You set them up to fail, not to mention that the Director is probably not going to select any of those so you are just wasting a lot of people's time, energy, paper and everything else.

Chairman Lopez stated just so I clearly understand this, say I want Alderman Shea in a labor grade 20 job and I know that he is working towards his degree so I tell him that I will put him at a grade 18 but when he gets the degree we can move him up. He can still do the same job basically.

Ms. Lamberton replied at a certain level you would be, but theoretically the degree would allow you to perform at a higher level as you retain that degree.

Chairman Lopez asked you would not perceive that once a department head did that and the person doesn't get his degree and he is at that position and then the department head comes back to you and says I need another person.

Ms. Lamberton answered I wouldn't let that happen. This is a situation where people have to be honorable. The employee has to be honorable and the department head has to be honorable. That is why you have Human Resources.

Alderman DeVries asked if the person didn't qualify for the position it would first have to be posted as it was already stated within the job description in-house right and be offered to anybody who did qualify and if there was nobody qualified what you are saying is that you consider reposting it at a different grade level.

Ms. Lamberton answered yes, which would be the right way to do it.

Alderman Shea stated I am not familiar with the previous wording of this Ordinance but...

Ms. Lamberton interjected "qualified" is a new word in the Ordinance. Just to take that a step further, the concern that Alderman Lopez had shared with me is would this remove the equivalencies that we have in a lot of jobs? No, we are not talking about that. We are talking about if you don't have a degree and say the job says a Bachelor's Degree and two years experience in cooking. You have a combination of a four-year degree plus two years of experience. That is six years of cooking so if you have had cooking for six years you are okay. If you were the cleaning person and you never cooked, then your application doesn't go forward because you don't know how to cook.

On motion of Alderman DeVries, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to approve the ordinance amendment for 33.027(F), Employee Recruitment and Selection.

Ms. Lamberton stated the third one is...if you look down five lines you will see that I put in parenthesis "maintenance of up-to-date class specifications). Currently the ordinance says that any minor change that might need to be added to a job specification or removed or just simply updated...I don't have the authority to do that. I have to come to you and we have to spend four months updating these things. I personally

think that is kind of a waste of time and money plus it discourages people from updating the specifications and then you will be at a point where you were a couple of years ago where you have to hire someone for all kinds of money to update them. All this would do would be to allow me to change a responsibility or describing the responsibility differently or something like that. It would not change the grade, or the title or the original purpose of the position. If any of that were to occur, it would have to go through the process.

On motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to approve the ordinance amendment to 33.012, Maintenance of Plans.

Chairman Lopez addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Communication from Robert Baldolati, Former Risk Manager, requesting that Anthem Insurance Company offer an alternative health insurance plan to City pensioners.

Ms. Lamberton stated I spoke to our manager from Anthem and he indicated that the health insurance company would not be willing to do that because we would end up with what they call adverse selection. Just as a matter of information, the prescription insurance is one of the things that is escalating financially and increasing the premiums in general on health insurance plans more than anything else. That is one of our biggest hits. I can understand what he is saying. I am not an expert in health insurance and I am not going to pretend to be but it would be like cherry picking, what plan you want so if you have a lot of prescription problems you are going to go with the one that is providing for that. If you don't, you are going to go with the lower costing one. All of the sudden the amount of money you are paying for the one that has prescription insurance with it is going to go way out of whack and the other one might stay the same or go down. Our current carrier is unwilling to do that.

Alderman DeVries asked have you investigated...I know you are looking at other insurance companies now and is that one of the lines that you are looking at, to split off prescriptions.

Ms. Lamberton answered yes.

Alderman Pinard asked should we table this.

Chairman Lopez answered I don't think we should table this.

Ms. Lamberton stated we have seven independent bidders for prescriptions and then you have Anthem, the Municipal Association and CIGNA bidding on prescriptions at the same time so we really have 10 people bidding on our prescription plan.

Chairman Lopez stated right now somebody is doing a staff study on that right.

Ms. Lamberton replied I just faxed a fellow a contract today and hopefully he will sign it and return it to me.

Chairman Lopez asked how long is that going to take.

Ms. Lamberton answered stated the contract requires that the contractor provide us with the final recommendations and analysis no later than April 5. In the meantime, he will be happy to meet with us at any time to discuss any of the proposals. He already knows that he is going to have to come before this Committee and the unions and the Aldermen, etc. We are going to hear more about insurance than we ever wanted to.

Chairman Lopez replied we are. The rates are unbelievable. They are going up 24% over last year. Out of courtesy, I am going to let Robert Badolati speak.

Mr. Badolati stated I gave Ms. Lamberton a letter in response to her letter. One of the articles is that 1/3 of the seniors and disabled people now on Medicare have no prescription drug charge. The reason is that prescription drug coverage is getting to be so expensive. I am not here to cost the City money. I was hoping that you would look into the possibility of offering the City of Manchester pensioners the alternative of coverage without prescriptions. I did want to say that I understand this adverse selection where the company is forced to subsidize those that do want prescription coverage. Now in my own case, my wife and I, she becomes 65 on April 1 and my premium would be \$551/month or \$6,614 a year. One of the alternatives I have is I can still stay with Anthem, get out of the City group plan and get on one of their most popular individual non-prescription plans, Plan F and pay \$177.65/month or \$2,132 annually. That is a savings of \$4,482 a year, which is significant. Now I am fortunate that I get prescriptions for myself through the VA. In my wife's case, she won't get any because we are in financial need but before I buy prescriptions here, I go up state into Canada and with the exchange rate the prescriptions are much cheaper. I am sure that doesn't help everyone but there are alternatives and there are some people who just can afford the insurance but they can't afford the prescription portion of it. The other thing that concerns me that you should be aware of is there is a possibility that...in one of the articles it says there was \$200 billion set aside by the President for prescription coverage. It is under the prescription drug horror stories article and I have attached a copy of that article in my package. What happens is when you become 65 in the City you are automatically required to get Medicare coverage, which is a good idea, however, pensioners are going to pay approximately \$600 in Medicare above what they are paying for the coverage that they have with the City plan. Then, of the \$600 that the pensioners are paying, Medicare pays approximately 80% of the costs that come in. Now, I would think that this would be reflected in the Medi Comp premium that you are

paying through the City. Instead, Anthem raises our rates. Here it is Medicare paying 80% of the cost and when you turn 65 your rates go up with Anthem. I never could figure that one out. My feeling is that when Medicare does offer prescription coverage you are going to have the same thing happen. You are going to have Anthem saying yes you have to buy from Medicare prescription coverage. If you don't have prescription coverage on your policy, that money comes to the employee. If you do have it, and Medicare is any example of what is going to happen, they are going to take that money. When I say take it, what happens is they are going to pay that...let's say they decide we are going to give everybody \$1,500 for prescription coverage under the new Medicare bill. They are going to say you have to get that so that cuts back on their payments and that is what Medicare does. You may end up not getting the advantage of it and if it holds true, you are going to end up paying them some more as you do under Medicare. When I looked into that and asked myself why I am paying more when I go on Medicare, they said well you are older and at higher risk. That doesn't make sense. The insurance company is really making out. You may have seen this article, it has been in several times, there is a tremendous market out there for Medi Comp plans. You have Banker's Life and all of these different companies and what happens is the rates are really low and some of them even have prescription coverage.

Chairman Lopez stated I think you make some valid points. The problem is that it is a complicated issue, as you are well aware of and I am sure that our Risk Manager is well aware of some of the issues here but in the answer that Virginia Lamberton sent regarding your question we don't offer that coverage. You have some excellent questions and I am sure that Ginny will review your response and during the review of the health insurance contracts some of these questions might be asked to the carrier that bids on the specifications that we provided. Those are excellent questions. I would be in the same position if I were 65. A lot of people go to the VA hospital and get their medicine for nothing so why do I have to pay for it? I agree with you on that but since it is a very complicated issue, as you are well aware of, I am going to let Ginny look into this as we get into the process of choosing a health insurance provider.

Mr. Badolati stated just one last point. The problem with prescription coverage is two fold. Presently, it costs more than 200% more than non-prescription coverage and it is increasing each year. Last year, Anthem rates went up 30%. I heard you mention that it may go up 24% this year. The non-prescription plan actually went down this year. If you look at the article it says Medi Comp plans A-J have lower premiums for 2002. All I am saying is prescription coverage, unless you have severe problems, is not worth the difference. I can have \$4,500 that I can pay out of my own pocket for prescriptions just in the difference in the premium plus the rates are going out of site. It is going to widen. I can see a several thousand dollar difference not too far away. I appreciate your efforts.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to receive and file this item.

Chairman Lopez addressed Item 7 of the agenda:

New hire/ termination reports submitted for informational purposes only.

On motion of Alderman DeVries, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to receive and file this item.

TABLED ITEMS

8. Communication from Chief of Police regarding transfer of juvenile court prosecutor's responsibilities from the Police Department to the City Solicitor's Office.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to receive and file this item.

9. Communication from Alderman Gatsas suggesting that the disabled be included in the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Elderly Services.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

Ms. McCarthy Slagle stated I can give you a brief update. At the last meeting I had indicated that I was going to be meeting with the departments regarding the status of the transition plan and the physical barriers that were still remaining regarding accessibility. I have met with several. I have two more meetings scheduled for this month and should be able to give you a full report next month as to the status of the plan.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to put this item back on the table.

10. Ordinance Amendment:

“Amending Section 33.049 Special Merit Pay Increases by changing the requirements of how they shall be granted.”

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

Chairman Lopez asked do we want to receive and file this item or deny it.

Ms. Lamberton stated if I remember right and I wasn't around when all of this started but it seemed to me that this Committee worked on this particular ordinance and then it got moved along and ended up in some other Committee that changed the language that this Committee had recommended and this Committee was a little concerned about that. I don't have the information with me. I need copies of that also.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to place this item back on the table.

Alderman Shea asked can we get rid of the special merit pay. Some members of the Board are in favor of getting rid of this because it is not going to the people who should be getting it. There was some discussion about who got it and it seemed to be more the supervisors who got it.

Chairman Lopez answered I think a majority of the Aldermen want to get rid of it.

Alderman Shea asked how do we get rid of it.

Ms. Lamberton stated currently the special merit pay is frozen. Nobody is getting that, which is basically a double increase.

Chairman Lopez stated we can get the back-up paperwork and then deny it.

Ms. Lamberton stated on the letter from Alderman Gatsas that Maureen was talking about, there were two points to it, well more than two points but two points that I would like to talk about. One is that Maureen is going to get the information for you on accessibility and all that kind of stuff for next month. The other point is that Alderman Gatsas had suggested that we create a position in the Elderly Services Department of a grant writer and I don't personally think that is appropriate. I think it would be a waste of money. Most people who are in their professions that have a relationship with getting grants...you can go to a workshop for \$75 and learn how to write grants. It is a matter of learning how to play Hot Cross Buns on the piano. Once you learn how to do it, you know it forever. I don't think the City...I would really discourage the City from having a position just to write grants. Each department head should be out there looking for grants for his or her department. That is just my opinion.

Chairman Lopez replied I disagree. I think the City as a whole...like the Police Department has a good grant writer and they go and get grants. Other departments are not qualified to go out and do that or they don't have time to do it. City wide, there should be somebody writing grants because we are missing a lot of grants.

Ms. Lamberton responded we can debate this but one of the things that is really important when you are writing a grant is that you are knowledgeable about the subject matter. One generic grant writer isn't going to be knowledgeable and he or she is going to have to sit with the department head for two days anyway to get knowledgeable about the particular type of grant. So if a department head goes to a workshop or we hire somebody to run a workshop on how to write grants, then they all would know how to do it and in the long run I think you would be better off. Do you see what I am saying?

Chairman Lopez replied I couldn't write a grant even if I went to a workshop. I was very fortunate to work with Ron Johnson for many years at Parks & Recreation. He can write grants.

Ms. Lamberton responded for Parks & Recreation. Can he write grants for Public Health?

Chairman Lopez stated he helped write grants for a few others.

Ms. Lamberton replied that is what I am saying. You can get the skills.

Chairman Lopez stated your argument is that we don't want that position in Elderly Services.

Ms. Lamberton replied if you were going to have a grants writer, I am not sure where you would put that person but it wouldn't be in Elderly Services.

Chairman Lopez stated I think the concern here is the second paragraph of Alderman Gatsas' letter and I have to agree with it. I don't know who the Aldermanic representatives are going to be but I don't know if the disabled people are really being taken care of in the City of Manchester and that is what I think the whole thrust of Alderman Gatsas' letter is. I don't know how we address that or how you are going to address it. You do have a person, Maureen, who is on the Access Manchester Committee. I am calling on your wisdom to take a look at the ADA Coordinator position and see what we are trying to create. When it was first started, it was because in 1994 or earlier than that we had nothing. They came out with a plan of what they were supposed to do in a period of years. They have done some of it, but not all of it. I don't know what the control factors are or anything else. You have a big job ahead of you.

Alderman DeVries stated I have a question. There was a scenario unfolding with a demotion and I didn't know if some action was going to be take on that this evening.

Chairman Lopez replied I got back from Florida this afternoon and before I left Gary Simpson was asked to go to a lower grade.

Alderman Shea asked who is that.

Alderman DeVries answered he is on the Fire Department.

Chairman Lopez stated in doing that, he lost quite a bit of money and he didn't understand it at that time or somebody gave him the wrong information. I contacted the HR Director and asked her to do a review of the whole thing and if everything is true from what I am hearing from the union he is going to lose about \$17,000 or \$18,000 a year by going to a lower grade.

Ms. Lamberton stated it was a voluntary demotion. He decided that he wanted to go back out on the line and fight fires.

Chairman Lopez replied he was previously a training officer but he wanted to go back and fight fires. Well you lose that money but supposedly somebody told him that he wasn't going to lose a lot of money. We are not sure who did what and Ms. Lamberton is investigating it.

Alderman Shea asked if I remember wasn't there some discussion about him not getting the same pay and then there was a meeting we had. That is the name that came up. I don't know the fellow.

Chairman Lopez stated it is demotion versus voluntarily stepping down. If you volunteer, you lose money. They were looking at the other option of let's say...

Ms. Lamberton interjected well disciplinary. What happened here was for some reason a couple of department heads complained about the way the ordinance was written for demotions. Last winter it came to you and you worked with Dave Hodgen to change the language. Somehow or another in September it finally got before the full Board and went by everybody, myself included. What the new ordinance did was said if you are at a step 3, regardless of your years of service, if you take a demotion you go to step 3 in the lower grade. The old ordinance said you go as close to you can to what you were currently earning.

Alderman DeVries stated you said you were going to handle this. Does that mean that you are pursuing this to see that he will be demoted to the place where his years of service indicate or are you looking to demote him to a Captain's pay?

Ms. Lamberton replied not a Captain's pay. He is not performing work at that level.

Alderman DeVries asked but if you take him down to the firefighter's scale you will look for the closest, which would be reflective also of his years of service right.

Ms. Lamberton answered that is what I am looking for.

Alderman DeVries stated in this case it is one in the same but forever would not be. If somebody was at a Captain's pay and going back to a firefighter with three or four years of service you would take it back to...

Ms. Lamberton interjected yes you would go to the same step. I personally think it should be based on...a voluntary demotion should be based on years of service. However many years you have in you go to that step to a point where you can't go anywhere else.

Alderman Shea stated a situation came up years ago where a fellow was principal of Green Acres School and the Assistant Principal of Hallsville School was resigning so he came over and said do you mind if I apply and I said I would love it so he went down to the Superintendent's Office and they said to him if you take that teaching job you will be at the bottom of the list and you could get pink slipped even though you have been in the school system 30 years as a teacher and then as a principal. He said well gee I don't want to jeopardize that.

Ms. Lamberton replied that wouldn't happen here because they are still in the same bargaining unit.

Chairman Lopez stated we have to give Ginny a chance to look into this. If he has been done wrong, I am sure she is going to correct it. We have to find out what is going on.

Alderman Shea asked wouldn't he understand that he was going to lose a lot of money before he agreed to it.

Ms. Lamberton answered that is one of the questions because there are different answers depending on who you ask.

Chairman Lopez stated some expert out there is giving somebody advice who maybe didn't know the answer.

Alderman DeVries stated there is also a scenario that unfolds within the Fire Department where frequently they go into Fire Prevention, which is an increase in their pay while they are in Fire Prevention and then they can step back out of Fire Prevention into the line of duty without a similar effect. They step right into the same pay scale where they would have been had they stayed as firefighters. It is different but I think it added to the confusion.

Alderman Shea asked did he already take the demotion.

Ms. Lamberton answered yes and he didn't realize what was going on until he got his first paycheck.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee